



LIONS ROAR

JDA'S Student-Created Newsletter

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Ysabella Ponce
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January 4-March 2, 2022

WINTER AND SPRING CELEBRATIONS

By Chayan Castellanos and Rufino Garza, Staff Writers



Kwanzaa - Celebrated Dec 26



What is Kwanzaa?

Beginning December 26 and lasting for seven days, Kwanzaa is a family and community celebration of communities created to help African Americans reconnect with their African roots and heritage. Here are some interesting facts you may *not* know about this annual celebration. ("Seven Interesting Facts about Kwanzaa." (PBS, Public Broadcasting Service).

Where did it originate?

1. Kwanzaa is based on ancient and modern celebrations in Egypt and Southeastern Africa.
2. The Kwanzaa holiday as we know it today, started in the United States in 1966.
3. Kwanzaa was created by Dr. Maulana Karenga, a professor at California State University, Long Beach after the Watts Riots in Los Angeles.
4. The goal of this holiday was to bring African Americans together as a community. (Lanin)

How is it celebrated?

A Kwanzaa ceremony may include drumming, musical selections, libations, a reading of the African Pledge and the Principles of Blackness, reflection, a discussion of the African principle of the day or a chapter in African history, a candle-lighting ritual, artistic performance, and, finally, a feast of faith. ("Kwanza") There are seven candles that the seven principles of Kwanza: Unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. (Watson)

"Kwanzaa." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 9 Jan. 2022. Web. 11 Jan. 2022

Lanin, Colleen. "Where Did Kwanzaa Originate?: Fun Facts about Kwanzaa." *TravelMamas.com*, 29 Dec. 2020, <https://travelmamas.com/where-did-the-holiday-kwanzaa-originate/>.

Christmas Around the World

By Manuel Vasquez and Medea Salinas



Around the world Catholics celebrate the birth of Jesus in different ways. In Italy they don't eat meat on Christmas Eve, and they visit the Vatican for midnight Mass. In Spain they have dinner with their families and then go to midnight Mass called "the Misa del Gallo." Finland celebrates the birth of Jesus on Christmas Eve. Russia celebrates the birth of Jesus with family, and it is considered a time of forgiveness and love. In Brazil, most of the events take place on Christmas Eve, including dinner. The U.S. and Mexico celebrate Christmas by opening presents on Christmas morning and by going to Holy Mass on Christmas Eve at midnight or on Christmas morning. Many people have different types of traditions, but we all celebrate and recognize the birth of Jesus. (Schumer)

Schumer, Lizz. "The Krampus and 14 Other Interesting Christmas Traditions from around the World." *Good Housekeeping*, Good Housekeeping, 14 Dec. 2020, <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/holidays/christmas-ideas/g34837704/how-christmas-is-celebrated-around-the-world/>.



The Orthodox Christians

By Renata Angulo and Camila Guajardo
Staff Writers



There are many Orthodox Christians who annually celebrate Christmas on or near January 6, mostly in central and eastern Europe. They remember and celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, which is described in the Christian Bible. Such dates were established in the Julian calendar, which pre-dates the Gregorian calendar that is commonly observed. They fast before January 6. Their fast excludes meat and dairy products but includes Lenten bread, nuts, dead fruit, mushroom soup, honey, vegetable, herbs such as potatoes, peas, and garlic. They also might include slow-cooked kidney beans with seasoning, Bobal'ki which is a small biscuit combined with sauerkraut or poppy seed with honey, and Baked cod.

Orthodox Christians do not celebrate Christmas on December 25. Orthodox churches include Orthodox Serbian, Greek, Ukrainian, Finnish, and Russian. There are also Eastern Orthodox churches, such as the Coptic Orthodox, Armenian, Indian, Syriac, and Ethiopian. Most Orthodox Churches are in full communion with the Catholic Church, meaning that parishioners may participate in the sacraments in each other's communities.

In the Gregorian calendar, many Orthodox Christians in the United States celebrate Christmas Day on or around January 7th.

What is Orthodox Christianity? - *Greek orthodox archdiocese of America*. Go to Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. (n.d.). Retrieved January 21, 2022, from <https://www.goarch.org/introduction>

Valentine's Day

By Michelle Lopez
and Estefania Quintana
Staff Writers



Valentine's Day is also known as St. Valentine's Day; this holiday is celebrated by lovers expressing their affection with greetings and gifts such as flowers, chocolates, and romantic letters. This holiday originates in the Roman festival of Lupercalia which was celebrated in mid-February. Unfortunately, Pope Gelasius I had forbidden the celebration, and it was replaced with St. Valentine's Day; however, this celebration wasn't a romantic holiday until the 14th century.

Although there were multiple Christian martyrs named Valentine, a priest who was martyred around the 270 CE by the emperor Claudius II Gothicus was named Valentine. According to the legend, the priest signed a letter "from your Valentine" to his jailer's daughter. It is believed that that St. Valentine defied the emperor's orders and secretly married couples to spare the husbands from war which is the reason his feast is associated with love.

Valentines or messages first appeared in the 1500s, and by the late 1700s cards were being used. Valentines is commonly represented by Cupid, the Roman god of love, along with hearts. Traditional gifts include candy and flowers, mainly red roses as a symbol of beauty and love.

Valentines cards are popular in the United States as well in Canada, Australia, Britain, Mexico, France, Argentina, and South Korea. In the Philippines, Valentine's Day is the most common wedding anniversary and other. This holiday has expanded to express affection not only to romantic relationships but relatives and friends.

STUDENT COUNCIL NEWS

By Carli Espinoza and Gabriela Joens, Staff Writers



The Lions Roar staff talked with student council president Joshua Velasquez about any news regarding events the student council is planning. The JDA student council worked diligently on planning activities for Catholic schools' week which took place last week of January. They are currently working on trying to schedule one last pep rally to have before the end of the school year. Student Council is also looking forward to offering the students more service opportunities. In addition to this, the senior class officers are preparing to plan prom which will be on April 22.

Religion News for the Spring Semester

BY: Viviana Salinas and Ana Martinez
Staff Writers



This semester Miss Kobisher's plans for the guilds and the pro-life club is to continue to spread the Catholic culture on campus. In January the pro-life club went to Washington DC for a pro-life march where students were able to see lots of snow and participate in pro-life activities. They also had to follow protocols and precautions due to COVID-19. Miss Kobisher said if a student reads this and tells her that Sponge Bob is the best man ever, she will give out a free piece of candy. Even though everyone was thrilled about this trip, Miss Kobisher says the planning for this event was a little stressful; she said, "I have grown several white hairs because of it."

Coming back from our Christmas break we downloaded a software for our service ministry hours which will be an easier way for us to keep track of the number of hours we have, and it will also help us learn to be more responsible. Also, a feast day that is important for our community is the feast day of Saint Agnes that was on the 21st of January, which also happens to be the patron saint of Miss Kobisher's room. Our faculty, staff and students view all the Holy Days of obligation as being essential to our faith.

Miss Kobisher sold Crush Can Grams for Valentine's Day to help support the pro-life club. She also helped organize our Ash Wednesday mass with Auxiliary Bishop Mario Avilés.

SOLEMNITIES AND OTHER SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS

- January 1, 2022** – The Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God
- January 6, 2022** – The Epiphany of the Lord
- January 9, 2022** – The Baptism of the Lord
- March 2, 2022** – Ash Wednesday
- March 19, 2022** – Solemnity of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- March 25, 2022** – The Annunciation of the Lord
- April 10, 2022** – Palm Sunday
- April 14, 2022** – Holy Thursday
- April 15, 2022** – Good Friday
- April 16, 2022** – Holy Saturday
- April 17, 2022** – Easter Sunday, the Resurrection of the Lord
- April 24, 2022** – Divine Mercy Sunday



The Lions Roar interviewed Mrs. Sandra Bitner as a representative of the JDA School Board. She started by sharing the names of the board members, which can be found on the JDA website: Beatriz Gonzalez, Chairman, George Cardenas, Vice Chairman, Asa Cozad, secretary, Lorena Castillo, treasurer, Ricardo Aguirre, Corazon Ajero, Raul Cabeza, Advisory Counsel, Sonia Candanoza, Joshua Cummings, Robert A Dyer, Fr. Greg Kuczanski, Fr. Greg Labus, and Doug Martin.

Moreover, the school board helped host JDA's 5th Annual Golf Tournament in Memory of Dr. Rafael Garza on Monday, Feb. 21, 2022, at McAllen Country Club, and will also host our annual Noche de Rosas Gala on Saturday, April 2, 2022.

Finally, the JDA School Board has budgeted funds in support of all school activities, receiving a monthly report on the activities done by the school. The School Board is in full support of assisting JDA in any way possible to help promote Catholic education.



The 5th Annual JDA Golf Tournament took place on Feb 21, 2022. As expected, a large amount of the student body showed up to help, especially the freshman class. According to 9th grader Monica Aguirre, the golf tournament was spectacular. “The food was amazing, and it was a terrific learning experience. Though the day was quite hot.” We also interviewed Ms. Carvajal who had a lot to say about the event. “Besides the sunburn I got, it was a very enjoyable experience to see how many people came out to support our school and how the parent support is awesome. The event would not have been able to function without the amazing parents!” she exclaimed.

Mr. Aldo Bertini, JDA Accounting Assistant, tirelessly coordinated the entire tournament and volunteered his time and talents to helping JDA reach their goals with this fundraiser. When asked about he liked best about the golf tournament, Mr. Bertini said, “It was such a beautiful and wonderful way to celebrate Dr. Garza with all the things he loved. The most enjoyable moments for me were seeing the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of Dr. Garza and Mrs. Garza there supporting JDA along with all the golfers.”

When asked about the success of the tournament, Mr. Bertini said, “It was a sold-out, 36 team, 108-player tournament, which far exceeded our goal and profits from the previous four tournaments!” Thanks to all who supported this worthwhile endeavor.

*SENIOR SPOTLIGHT:
FRANK ROZEK*



By Maria Salazar, Staff Writer



Franciszek” Frank” Rozek is a senior who came from Poland to the Rio Grande Valley to study. Frank has an older sister and a dog back in Poland, and although he misses his family, he is excited to be here in the U.S.

Frank attended Kopernik’s Elementary School in Sandomierz school for both elementary and middle school. His hobbies include playing soccer and basketball, as well as playing the piano. Frank wanted to come to the U.S because, as he says, “There are more opportunities here and it’s easier to study here since Poland has a more advanced educational curriculum. It was a hard transition at first because I didn’t know English that well and the seven-hour time difference between Poland and America was difficult.”

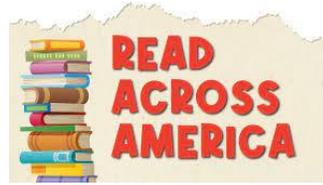
Frank’s favorite aspects of the U.S are the warm weather, the food, and the people here. “They’re so friendly and open,” he says. He has also really loved discovering American and Mexican culture.

In the future, Frank hopes to graduate and go to college for engineering either here or in Poland, although if he were to stay here, he would like to remain in Texas. “I would also like to visit my family in Poland during the summer and stay safe from Covid,” he said.

Frank plans to serve the Lord in the future by continuing to be an altar server, attending mass, and helping people. We are truly blessed to have Frank Rozek as part of the JDA family.

READ ACROSS AMERICA 2022

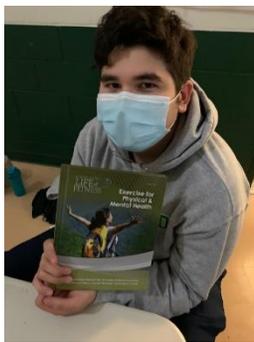
By Estefania Quintana, Staff Writer



The first annual JDA Read Across America Day took place on February 24, 2022, to promote reading as well as good health. The afternoon activities focused nonfiction literature that emphasized healthy lifestyles. Library books about health were available for checkout by the librarian, Mrs. Nevanen.

There were four presentations from which students could rotate to learn about aspects of good health: Miss Jasmine Long gave a presentation on the benefits of exercise; Mrs. Veronica Rodriguez presented a power point about healthy emotions; Mrs. Kathryn Steward, RN, spoke about healthy diets and the right foods to eat and what to avoid to maintain healthy sugar levels; Mr. Tony Casso, a former JDA coach, highlighted his weight-loss journey and how diet and exercise can improve our overall health. Each presenter also showed the books that are available to read regarding each topic.

Read Across America Day, was created in 1997 by the National Education Association to celebrate reading throughout the US. The first Read Across America Day was held on March 2, 1998, which is also Dr. Seuss' birthday. Many elementary school librarians throughout the country celebrate this day by reading Dr. Seuss books to students. Older students recognize the day by reading about current events or nonfiction titles. "It was a productive, informative and fun afternoon," said Mrs. Nevanen.



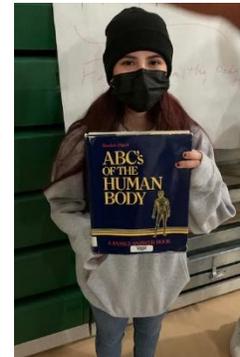
Emilio Romero shows off a book about exercise.



Luka Tokic holds a book about psychology.



Coach Long and Andrea Vasquez discuss the benefits of exercise.



Helen Schumack looks at a book about anatomy.